North-Eastern Regional Office of Doordarshan

1168. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Engineer, North-Eastern Regional Office of Doordarshan has been operating from Calcutta although the same was started in a rented house at Ganeshguri, Guwahati few years back;

(b) if so, the date of starting the office at Guwahati and monthly rent being paid since inception;

(c) the reasons for non-functioning at Guwahati; and

(d) the time by which its functioning from Guwahati would be ensured?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The building was hired in February, 1996 and at present a monthly rent of Rs. 25,460/- is being paid.

(c) and (d) Prasar Bharati has informed that they could not operationalise the office of the Chief Engineer, North-Eastern Zonal Office, Guwahati due to non-availability of adequate staff. They have also informed that they have posted Director (E) and DDA to Guwahati who are establishing the office. The Prasar Bharati are being advised to complete the process soon.

Retirement of Members from Prasar Bharati Board

1169. SHRI V.N. GADGIL:

Will the MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCSTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since retired members, Shrimati Romila Thapar and Rajendra Yadav from the Prasar Bharati Board; and

(b) if so, under what provision of law or rules, they have been retired?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) These Members have been retired under Sub-section (3), read with Sub-section (5) of Section 6 of Prasar Bharati Act, 1990.

Economic Possibilities of Film Industry

†1170. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the extent to which the economic possibilities have increased after giving the status of industry to film industry;

(b) whether people related to this industry have submitted their demands to Government and if so, the nature of these demands?

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) After the status of Industry Sector was accorded to the film industry, in the Budget for 1999-2000, the benefits of a new Section 80 HHF of the Income Tax Act has been made applicable to companies engaged in the export of entertainment software.

(b) and (c) The Ministry has taken up the following proposals received from the film industry with the Ministry of Finance in order to enable the entertainment sector to avail of the benefits available to the Information Technology (I.T.) Sector thus making it possible to tap its full potential as a foreign exchange earner and to generate employment opportunities:

(i) rates of customs duty on professional equipment for films, television and music industry may be similar to the duty structure laid down for I.T. Sector;

(ii) customs duty and countervailing duty on colour raw stock be waived as it is not manufactured in India;

(iii) exemption from payment of excise duty on pre-recorded video cassettes may be given with retrospective effect;

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.